

ONE LEAGUE

BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

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ADNA WRIGHT LEONARD

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HEARTHSTONE LEAGUE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

ADNA WRIGHT LEONARD

Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church



THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN
NEW YORK CINCINNATI

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HEARTHSTONE LEAGUE

THE Hearthstone League is a movement and not an organization. It does not necessitate the election of a president, a secretary, and treasurer. It does not add to the administrative responsibilities of the pastor. It is intended to aid in the reestablishment of the family altar, the enrichment of the religious life of the home, and the deepening of the spiritual life of the pastor and people through intercessory prayer.

The best method of getting the Hearthstone League movement before the local church is for the pastor to announce that on a certain Sunday he will preach on "The Rebuilding of the Family Altar," or, if he desires, some other phase of the general subject of "Religion in

the Home."

THE PLAN

At the close of the sermon "The Hearthstone League" cards should be distributed, each adult member of the congregation receiving one.

It will be observed that there are three obligations—"Daily Family Worship," "Grace at the Table," and "Christian Conversation in the Home."

There is no denying the fact that the family altar as a regular institution in the homes of

Christian people is very largely a thing of the past. Young people are going out into the world, assuming life's responsibilities with no knowledge whatever of the value and importance of family worship. It is scarcely necessary to comment on the handicap the young people are under who attempt to face the duties and burdens of life with prayerless homes as a background. It is nothing less than a tragedy for young men and young women to go out into life with no recollection of ever having heard their names in father's or in mother's prayers.

Once the family altar is established, the saying of grace at the table will be comparatively easy. This beautiful and Christian custom is more generally observed than family worship, but nevertheless this, too, is

swiftly passing away.

It is true that many parents have neglected their responsibility for so long that it seems to them an impossibility to begin now. If that is the case, many books are being published with a view to aiding and promoting family worship. The Methodist Book Concern has given special attention to this matter with the result that now there are available through that agency a line of devotional books for use in the home unexcelled by those produced by any other publishing house. These books

contain a brief but bright service for every day in the calendar year, including appropriate Scripture passages, with comments and expositions by well-known ministers and teachers; hymns that have in them real merit; and prayers written by eminent spiritual leaders of the Christian Church. With such a wealth of aids to family worship and so easily obtainable, there is no excuse for Christian homes

being prayerless homes.

The third obligation-"Christian Conversation in the Home"—is deeply significant and vitally important. Unkind criticism of the church and of the ministry is all too common. In Protestantism reverence for the church and genuine respect for the preacher do not seem to run very deep. If this statement may seem to some to be too strong, then we say without fear of contradiction that there is too much careless and unkind criticism of the church and the ministry in the presence of children and youth. How can we expect our boys and girls to have a sacred regard for the church and the ministry if they hear them bitterly and severely criticized in the home? Ministers are seldom born in such an atmosphere. Missionaries do not come from homes that have only criticism for church and preacher. Those who sign the Hearthstone League cards obligate themselves not only to observe daily family worship and grace at the table but also not to criticize either the church or the preacher in any unkind or severe manner in the presence of children and youth. Let us have for the next twenty-five years homes where there is reverence for the church and a genuine regard for the ministry, and many perplexing problems confronting the church to-day will be solved.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

If the heads of families will begin praying daily for the church and preacher, and if the pastor will hold up to the throne of grace daily individual men, women and children, many of our churches will become spiritually transformed. The church needs to return to passionate intercessory prayer. We are depending too much upon programs and surveys and plans. There is danger of losing sight of the fact that prayer must undergird our every endeavor. Prevailing pagan ideas of prayer must be counteracted by a church that will once more know the meaning of a Jacob-like wrestling with God in prayer.

Jesus said, "I pray for them"; can his followers do less?

PREPARATION FOR A REVIVAL

The most successful efforts in public evangelism are preceded by weeks of preparation, including a house-to-house canvass of the membership of the church. The best plan is for two workers to go together and acquaint the members of the church with the plans of the pastor for the work of the church in general, and in particular to acquaint them with the efforts being made in preparation for the revival meetings. If, in going from house to house, the workers acquaint the heads of families with the Hearthstone League movement, and present the cards to them for their signatures, large numbers of people will be glad to enroll themselves as members of the League.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AND THE HEARTH-STONE LEAGUE

The Adult Department of the Sunday school could do no better than to give one Sunday to a consideration of those things for which the Hearthstone League stands. A Sunday given to a study of "Religion in the Home" would win many recruits for this movement, and make a very definite contribution to the spiritual life of the entire church.

EPWORTH LEAGUE

The young people of the Epworth League—when once this movement is understood by them—could devote one week in the year to securing members of the Hearthstone League among the members of their own families. Parents would find it difficult to resist the appeal of a child to have daily family prayers in the home.

Women's Missionary Societies

Here is a definite task for the women's missionary societies in the local church. If the women of the missionary societies would take this matter seriously and cooperate with the pastor in endeavoring to persuade the heads of the families of the church to establish an altar of worship in the home, they would create a spiritual atmosphere that would make the church dynamic. Their own organizations would take on new life and power.

In my last pastorate I started this movement. Year after year there had been special evangelistic efforts, and results were always encouraging. One winter there was a noticeable lack of enthusiasm as the time drew near for the special meetings. The above plan was used with marked success. Hundreds of people signed the cards and the family altar was rebuilt or

established in large numbers of homes. The people became real intercessors, misunderstandings were cleared up, the church became spiritually eager. For many months the revival fires burned and large numbers of people, young and old, accepted Christ as their personal Saviour.

The Hearthstone League by the grace of God was more largely responsible for the success of the work that winter than any other human

agency.

In addition to the above suggestions the pastor will find that those who enroll themselves as members of the Hearthstone League will be glad to obligate themselves also to a prayerful remembrance of the great pressing problems of the church. This would include the missionary and educational interests of the church at home and abroad, and the large and growing activities of the church that are demanding attention, and that must be given help.

A home in which the family altar becomes a permanent institution will not limit the prayer life of the home to the family—to the pastor or to the church, but will reach out to the wide, wide world and, like the Christ, pray that the kingdom of God may come on earth, and that

it may come quickly.

A. W. LEONARD.

RELIGION IN THE HOME

THE home life of the people must not be over-looked in all attempts to appraise the religious conditions of the present period. Wise interpreters believe that here we find the weakest and saddest of the factors that may explain, and are sure to produce, a spiritual decline. Therefore any effort to reach the heart of our problem cannot stop short of the hearthstone and of the family altar.

For, without question, that altar has been having a hard time. This is partly because the life of the present day is complex and hurried, but more because we have somewhat lost the domestic emphasis amid the many fine but less important emphases. We sorely need a revival of the doctrine that fathers and mothers are the natural mediators between God and their children, and that, therefore, the home is God's most wonderful church. Even as God's kingdom secured its great start in the tent of Abraham, which was an itinerant sanctuary, so in these new days that kingdom must be promoted in the homes of the modern day.

Therefore any book or any movement which represents the effort toward a revival of domestic piety should be hailed with reverent delight. This little volume has been prepared by the son of a God-fearing home. Memories are written into the formalities of these pages. May the movement which the little volume represents spread over our church and over all the lands until family altars may be built and those that have been torn down may be rebuilt to the glory and praise of the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

EDWIN H. HUGHES.

THE HOME—A VITAL CENTER

THEY tell us that a crime wave rolls over the land. They are sure that the ideals of public and private morality are greatly lowered. They comment regretfully upon a growing indifference to the church.

Much of that is sadly true. What is the chief cause?

Is not much of the trouble in our modern home life? Has not the home lost much of its Christian idealism? Are its Christian influences as potent as they once were? Is there not a growing impotence in home control?

When I speak of "control" I do not have in mind the promulgation of ironclad rules, and the severe enforcement of such rules. Rather do I mean that voluntary and spontaneous respect and obedience which spring from reverence and love.

What a pity when the father becomes so engrossed in business and the mother so absorbed in social obligations as that the home is regarded as a place of mere minor importance!

Parents cannot afford to grow away from their children, nor permit the children to grow away from them. They surrender no adult dignity if they hold as confidential chums their own boys and girls. Do they not in this way attach the young people to them by hooks of steel?

Do you know any good man or woman who had not a good mother? The laws of heredity and of environment both hold good. We simply cannot get away from their tremendous

grip.

I was entertained not so long ago in a home which greatly charmed me by its atmosphere and life. It had a quiet yet hearty hospitality which I instantly felt. At the dinner table I incidentally mentioned the minister's name. Several members of the family made some reference to his characteristics and work. I was struck with the tone of these comments. Everything which was said was generous and kindly. Not even one word of criticism was spoken. In conversation with the mother afterward she explained that it was the rule of the home to speak in this way of the minister and the

church. "That is not a new experience to me, she added. "I do not remember ever having heard in my father's home one harsh word spoken about a minister."

We agree that one of the urgent needs of our day is an intensified loyalty to the church. Do you think that young people who grow up in such an atmosphere of appreciation will ever lack in loyalty to the church? On the other hand, can you reasonably expect that those who constantly hear the minister criticized by those who are older will grow up to respect the pastor and have confidence in the church to which he ministers?

What a fine conception is this which has led to a reemphasis upon home life in general and *Christian* home life in particular! The home, religious or irreligious, reaches out through all the years. Its influence never dies. Its impressions are never effaced. Its trends are seldom reversed. It starts its graduates up or down. It is the center of more possibilities, good or evil, than are concentrated anywhere else on earth.

The Christian home! May benedictions flow out from parlor, and sitting room, and library and all the rest! And may the firm hand which it lays upon life and destiny never be relaxed!

The church must lift a voice of warning

against anything which modifies the mission of the Christian home. Not only so, but the church must foster in most zealous ways every agency which will, in any way, extend the influence of this vital center of all that is good.

JOSEPH F. BERRY.

THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

THE first need in every household is the recognition and consciousness of the presence of Jesus Christ. It is history that he is the maker of what we have come to know by this title, "the home." In the lands to which he has not gone, the home, in a true and adequate sense of the term, has not come. Experience teaches the added lesson that it is the spirit of Christ which binds the members of a family into real and lasting unity, and which makes them most useful to each other and to the community.

How may we in our homes practice the Divine Presence? By thinking about the best Friend whom we have until he seems as real as is any other person who dwells with us. By conversing with him so often that when opportunity comes the mind turns to him as naturally as the needle to the pole or the flower to the sun. By that wordless communion which we

often have with those whom we love, and which brings them "closer to us than breathing."

There are outward signs by which the presence of Christ is made known. One of these is conversation free from taints of irreverence, unkindliness, and lack of faith. Cheerfulness, self-control and the prompt approval of good thoughts and of high ideals expressed by others have a plain implication to those with whom we live. Nothing so clearly indicates that the Master is with us as does evidence of self-denial and of the will to serve.

I am a firm believer in the ministry of art. There are pictures of Christ and of events in his life, one or more of which should adorn the walls of every dwelling. An attractive and well-framed object of this kind in the private room of the boy or girl will exert a silent but often a compelling influence on the mind. At some time of temptation or special need, the Face Divine will flash into memory with subtle power. Not one Christian habitation should lack the mute witness of the faith of those who abide therein.

Family worship is often made too difficult or too burdensome by reason of the length of time supposed to be necessary or actually given to its exercises. There may be appropriate times for reading much Scripture and

for many words of thanksgiving and petition. This is not best often. A few well-chosen verses, or a single one, a moment of praise and prayer or only a few moments—sometimes without words—may be much more impressive to restless, eager children. There is no value in formal, spiritless or tedious worship, in public or private.

Food, clothing, shelter, however important we may think them, are not more essential to human life than is the known and welcomed presence of Christ. There are fitting times to speak His name out—when there is special joy or sorrow, at Christmas and Easter, when some one is absent, or in need or peril, when the church is in some life-winning campaign—in a word, when there is any good pretext for letting others into the secret of our deepest thought and relationship. The one and supreme thing is that every home should have Christ in it and should make him at home there.

F. D. LEETE,

A LESSON FROM THE CAMEL

The camel, at the close of day,
Kneels down upon the sandy plain,
To have his burden lifted off
And rest to gain.

My soul, thou too, shouldst to thy knees When daylight draweth to a close, And let thy Master lift the load And grant repose.

Else how couldst thou to morrow meet, With all to-morrows work to do, If thou thy burden all the night Didst carry through?

The camel kneels at break of day
To have his guide replace his load;
Then rises up anew to take
The desert road.

So thou shouldst kneel at morning's dawn That God may give thee daily care, Assured that He no load too great Will make thee bear.

-Author unknown.

BOOKS FOR THE FAMILY ALTAR

Service and Prayers for Church and Home. Bishop W. P. Thirkield

Morning Prayers for Home Worship. George Skene

Throne of Grace. Bishop W. A. Quayle

Moments of Devotion. Bruce S. Wright

Weekday Prayers. Christian F. Reisner

A Book of Worship. Wade Crawford Barclay

My Daily Meditation. John Henry Jowett

Book of Family Worship. W. Robert Nicholl

My Daily Prayer. F. B. Meyer-Revell

Worship in the Home. Ella Broadus Robertson

Day Unto Day. George Matheson

God's Minute. By Three Hundred and Sixtyfive Eminent Clergymen and Laymen

The Gates of Dawn. W. L. Watkinson

HEARTHSTONE LEAGUE



HE persons whose names are inscribed in this book are members of the Hearthston, League of the

Methodist Episcopal Church of Bolif

They have obligated themselves to observe

DAILY FAMILY WORSHIP
GRACE AT EVERY MEAL AND

CHRISTIAN CONVERSATION IN THE HOME.

Being members of the Hearthstone League they compose my special prayer list and I solemnly pledge myself to remember them daily at the Throne of Grace and to encourage them in fulfilling their obligations.

"I Pray for Them." —Jesus.

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Most pages blank.

1. Family--Religious life. 2. Family--Prayerbooks and devotions. I. Hearthstone League.

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